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ASHLAND, Ohio, Aug. 29, 1888.

Night Observance of the Supper And Foot-washing.

The Brethren Church keep the ordinance of the Lord's Supper and wash the saint's feet in the night. This practice is different in all respects from the practice of the reformers.

Before proceeding far in this inquiry, let the reader remember that the Brethren Church is no part of the reformation by Martin Luther. In not that sense is it a Protestant Church. Luther reformed upon one *Idea*; namely, protesting against the supremacy of the Pope. Hence that reformation was not so much a return to the simple gospel methods of Christianity, as it was an effort to discard the ecclesiastical tyranny of that religions autocrat.

The Brethren reformation was commenced in 1708 and was founded upon the plain desire to follow the Lord Jesus in his own appointed ways. The gospel only was taken as a guide and the great desire of its early defenders was to follow Jesus and properly obey his commandments.

From this honest and humble motive, they were led to obey the ordinances mentioned above in the night. What argument can be offered in support of this practice?

The part of the Mosaic Theocracy corresponding to the Lord's Supper is the Passover. The two institutions centered in Christ. The passover was the type of the Lord's Supper, so to speak. The history of the Passover shows conclusiveiy that it was kept in the night. It could not be legally observed in the day. That institution was not kept simply to fill the stomach, but to inculcate a great and important lesson. Bondage is an institution of darkness, an institution of the devil, who is darknesa. Therefore men who are in darkness must leave in darkness for the light. They can not leave in light. Bondage means intellectual darkness, and this was the most serious part of the bondage in Egypt. The oppression was making intellectual pigmies of God's peculiar people. The ruler was plunging them into darkness. Their minds were losing the knowledge of the living and true God; and they were sinking into an illiterate and brutish people. So the Passover was instituted in the night. It was killed at the close of the day and eaten in the night. It marked the time they left darkness for God's holy light.

The Passover, the type of the feast of the Christian Church was instituted in the night. This feast, the Lord's Supper, was also instituted in the night—perfect harmony between them.

The supper is the renewing of our remembrance of the sufferings and death of Christ, necessary to bring us from the darkness of sin to the light of saving truth. The feast, to each believer should commemorate the exodus of his people which exodus is Christ. He brings them from bondage and darkness, and it is most befitting that the institution be observed in the night.

The word itself supports night observance. It is called a supper by Luke, by John, and St. Paul calls it the Lord's Supper. Supper, in the dialect and language of the New Testament means an evening or night meal, the chief meal of the day.

Again night observance "more fitly represents the scenes of the Lord's sufferings and death," as a certain writer says.

Considered from every point of view, night observance is most appropriate in keeping the Supper and washing feet. Every scriptural evidence favors it, and the disciples observed it in the night, and so the Primitive Church. Day observance of the supper is an innovation, and robs it of the impressive lessons it should teach, in a great degree.

"The Christian Passover."

In the progress of my new book, "the Gospel according to Jesus," I have been investigating the ordinance of the Lord's supper, and I find that the more this subject is investigated with an unbiased mind, the more evidence will be adduced in favor of this as a Christian feast. I noticed that in the issue of Aug. 8th, No. 32, we find an article copied from the Herald of Truth. This probably is the name the editor has given the article to suit his reply, rather than to suit the production of the writer.

I am glad that the writer has spoken so plainly, as no doubt there are many in the Brethren church who incline to such an opinion of the Lord's Supper.

The writer says, "the Scriptures clearly show that the last supper of Jesus was the Jewish passover." Allow me to take direct issue with you, my brother, and I will refer you to John 13 : 1. Which tells us the supper was *before* the feast of the passover. How long we do not know, but at least twenty-four hours. Then in verse 29, the remark of Jesus to Judas was understood to mean that he should buy something for the passover feast. Then in John 18: 28, after the supper and betrayal, the accusers of Jesus would not go into the pagan judgment hall, for fear of defilement, that they could not keep the passover. Then in John 19 : 31, we are told it was the "preparation," so says Matthew, when he was crucified. The day of preparation was the day when the passover was killed and other preparations made, so was *before the feast*. Now when brother C. says this was the Jewish passover, he fairly contradicts John. But the writer has, like many more, fallen into the error of concluding from the language of the disciples, "where shalt thou that we prepare the passover?" and the words, "and they made ready the passover," together with the exclamation of Jesus "with desire I have desired to eat *this* passover with you," he interprets these from the standpoint that it was the passover, although John possitively declares it wasn't. But this question is too lengthy to discuss at this time, so will have to refer you to our book "the Gospel according to Jesus," for a full explanation.

Then our worthy editor has no authority from the Scriptures to call it a Christian passover. It was never called a passover. The words of Jesus recorded in Luke 22 : 15, does not refer to the meal before them, but the feast that they and all the other Jews in Jerusalem came to celebrate.

That some of the early church fathers called it a Christian passover does not make it so. There is no Gospel authority for the name, although there is no particular harm in it.

Then as to the theory of Jesus instituting it "in his High Priestly office," it sounds logical and reasonable enough, but why go through all this trouble merely to give this meal this name. If it was not the Jewish passover, it was but a common meal made sacred, because of the associations connected with it. That it should be called a Christian passover is all too far fetched, and entirely unnecessary. It was a meal—a supper, and the Lord's last supper on earth. The Apostle Paul calls it the Lord's Supper. And on what authority do the church fathers or any one else call it the Christian passover?

Nothing should be done without an object, therefore before giving this meal a new name, the object ought to be plainly stated. We ought to be satisfied with the name Paul gives it—the Lord's Supper.

E. MASON.

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

Bro. Mason has a little criticism to offer regarding "Christian Passover." The article in which it occurred, above the signature, "C.," was found in a Mennonite paper, the *Herald of Truth*. It was not our purpose to introduce any thing new. Our brother did not catch the drift of what we wrote. The article contained a line of argument that our young brethren must meet every where. The Disciples, United Brethren—in short the leading theologians of the age use it to put away the supper. "C." in his article suggested that the supper that Christ ate with his disciples could not have been a "Christian Passover." He seemed to comprehend what that should mean, and we went on to show that there was argument to support the use of such a term and it would be expressive. We alluded to Christ as the High Priest so strongly because there lies the whole foundation of our doctrinal structure. If Christ was not clothed with priestly powers, then his commands are of no force.

What we want is argument to support our institutions that will stand fire, and the attacks of creditable criticism. There are only two consistant premises to occupy. One is to know but very little, and do what is known, like the Salvation Army; and the other is to be scholarly and argumentatively, and defend your belief with scripture and sound logic. Our young ministers profess to be scholarly. They so pose before men, and when they deliver a proposition or doctrine, they are expected to support it by scripture, argument and logic. On the Supper subject we are like the brother who told Dr. Franklin, "we are not sure that we are arrived at the end of this progress. The supper we do not allude to—that is right—but in the strength of our arguments there is room for progress. Let God be humbly implored to give us knowledge upon this subject until no one can assail our principles effectually.

We confess what we wrote lacked definiteness of conclusion. This is the case with many things we write. Bro. Mason knows our condition and makes allowances instead of censuring. The whole proceeds of this paper are less than the amount of money paid for the editorial work on such papers as the *Religious Telescope, Reformed Messenger, Evangelic Messenger*, and is not half as much as the editors of the church weeklies of the larger denominations receive. We receive very small pay for doing the work of foreman of the office, so all the bookkeeping, editorial work and correspondence is gratuitious work done in the interests of the church. Through this sacrifice, we are able to put out a weekly that compares creditably, we are told, with other church papers. This is our apology for defects in articles often appearing in these columns.

Now for our position on the question in hand. The Supper subject is the first Bible question we began to investigate. We've been at it for twenty years. We've examined thousands of books in the great libraries of the land, and believe we have a premise that can be defended in the Bible and primitive church history. In the matter of practice, Bro. Mason, we do not differ enough to talk about. But the doctrine upon which we base our faith and practice differs greatly. This is the beauty of the gospel alone as a rule of faith. We get the practice right if the solution is wholly unlike. When we get the same answer to a problem, we will show due regard to each other's methods of solution if they do differ.

Here is the way we get there :

1. Christ was made High Priest at his baptism, and clothed with authority to give commandments, or was ordained the Law Giver, and from that time on he was not responsible to the law of Moses.

2. His last supper was kept at the appointed time for keeping the Passover, and in that supper the Mosaic Passover was modified and so changed—the elements composing it, the ceremonies, times of holding it, and designs—as to adapt it to a universal religion and practice, and the needs of Christianity. Christ, the Law Giver or High Priest, making the changes.

3. That Supper was an institution of the church of Christ, and not Jewish or Mosaic.

Christ kept his supper on the evening of the fourteenth of the first month, just after sunset of the 13th day.

The preparation was the 14th, and followed the passover meal, and consisted in baking unleaven bread and providing other food to continue the Passover feast. It was therefore the preparation of the passover, although it followed the first meal.

The fact, Bro. Mason, that the murderous Jews who would not go in the judgment hall shows that the passover had been eaten by the other Jews. Those wicked men had been out watching for Jesus, and so had not time to eat it, and proposed to do so just as soon as they had Jesus off their hands. If they intended to eat it after the close of the 14th, they would have been clean, because such uncleanness lasted only till sundown.

It might be well to notice too that the Egyptian Passover was kept on the evening of the 14th, or after the close of the 13th. Ex. 12 : 6. The lamb was killed at sundown at the end of the 13th, and the blood was stricken on the lintel, etc. This required about an hour. Then it was rosted with fire, and rosted whole. This took about three hours. Then allowing one hour for other preliminaries, this would bring the meal at 11 o'clock at night. Then at midnight, (Ex. 12 : 29,) the destroying angel passed over. Then about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 14th, Pharaoh, called for Moses and Aaron, and wanted them to leave Egypt. The order was given to the children of Israel by Moses to prepare to go. This was the first PREPARATION.

It was now four o'clock. Then the children of Israel, begged many things from the Egyptians, and in this way the forenoon of the preparation was spent. Ex. 12 : 35, 36. About noon the three million and six hundred thousand of the children of Israel were under march to the borders of Egypt. In the night following the 14th, they went out of Egypt. Deut. 16 : 1.

So much in the search for solid argument.

Look at the "College Department' in every paper, and see what is being done for the University.

A writer in the Reformed Church Messenger, said :

"The dogmatic and ecclesiastical age of Christianity has lasted till now, and because it shows evident signs of drawing to a close, many good people are afraid that Christianity is drawing to a close." There is a volume of truth in those few words. When the everlasting harrangue about the dogmas is dropped, some suppose Christianity is going. Let no one be so deceived. There are more Christians in the world today than there ever was before.

"A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another as I have loved you" are parting words of Jesus. Love is the fulfilling of the law. How weighty this subject is, yet how little it concerns the many professors. When the heart is full of envy, malice hatred and jealousy, that love which Christ had, can not dwell there. The soul can be purified only by obeying the truth, and that command is a part of truth that will have wonderful cleansing power when obeyed.

"We come and go"—how that truth should be impressed upon our hearts. Some men act as though they were to live always. But how soon death may come upon them. No ordinary man has any reasonable assurance that he will live one day of the future. Life is as thought we were walking among a rain of thunderbolts, and any minute may end life. External dangers and internal disease are always abounding and the death trap may be sprung without a moments notice or a parting farewell. If all Christians would live as though on the journey to the grave, more good would be done, and the new commandment would have more perfect work upon the minds of the professing. There is no salvation outside of obedience to the new commandment. Let the believer in Christ take warning. If you fail to do it, your heart is not right.

Harvest Meetings are becoming very general. There seems to be an irrepressible desire in the heart for good social meetings. The Feast of Tabernacles, under the Law of Moses, was a harvest meeting. While good lessons were taught at the feasts of the old Bible, yet the occasion for them was not wholly created by the law. The desire existed in the hearts of men, and God only sought to direct and use that desire to subserve man's social, moral and religious interests. In the apostolic church the love feast took the place of the feasts of earlier times; and instead of being a burdensome duty as its keeping seems to be to some now, it was a season of refreshing and joy to the participants. It was not bound in by customs, usages and ceremonies to such an extent that all freedom of feeling was crushed out, and the innocent quaking with fear, lest some one is secretly comdemning her dress, style, deportment, watching for faults or mishaps in doing the service of the occasion.

Next week the odds and ends of the summer will be cleaned up, and mete out justice, and then a good grip will be taken on the fall work.

Send in all your church news and make the paper lively during the fall and winter.

If you have an interesting fact of church history send it in for the Annual without fail.